

COMMITTEE ON  
**SCIENCE, SPACE, AND  
TECHNOLOGY**  
CHAIRMAN LAMAR SMITH



For Immediate Release  
June 24, 2015

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**Statement of Environment Subcommittee Chairman Jim Bridenstine (R-Okla.)**

*U.S. Energy Information Administration Report: Analysis of the Impacts of EPA's Clean Power Plan*

**Chairman Bridenstine:** Today's hearing focuses on EPA's Clean Power Plan and the tremendous costs that will be placed on the economy and the American people upon final implementation. I am particularly concerned about how this regulation will affect access to affordable and reliable electricity, and in fact today the House will be voting on H.R. 2042, the Ratepayer Protection Act of 2015, which would prevent states from having to implement a state plan, or be subject to a federal plan, in order to comply with the Clean Power Plan if the Governor determines that such a plan would negatively affect ratepayers through increased rates. I am a cosponsor of this bill and I anticipate its passage later today and encourage my colleagues to support the bill.

I would like to thank Chairman Smith for requesting that Energy Information Administration conduct this very important study at the heart of today's hearing. I look forward to hearing from the EIA about what their analysis reveals about the impacts of the Clean Power Plan.

A few weeks ago, this Committee heard from industry groups on what will happen should the Clean Power Plan be finalized. We learned that the total compliance costs of the rule could be as high as \$366 billion by 2030, according to a study by NERA Economic Consulting. Additionally, the regulation is projected to cause steep electricity price increases in 43 states.

Moreover, the Committee also heard testimony that the EPA is using questionable legal authority to promulgate the Clean Power Plan under section 111 of the Clean Air Act. In fact, Laurence Tribe, a leading environmental and constitutional law professor and mentor to President Obama, recently referred to the method by which this rule was enacted as "burning the Constitution."

I understand that some of our witnesses here today have analyzed the supposed benefits that EPA claims the rule provides and have found that the costs outweigh these benefits. Additionally, the EPA's analysis of the benefits of the Clean Power Plan relies heavily on the "social cost of carbon," a value determined by the government to be the cost of reducing the amount of carbon in the atmosphere. The social cost of carbon, as we will hear today, is a value determined without transparency with a very questionable economic model. The fact that this Administration would rely so heavily upon the social cost of carbon for its rulemaking calls into question the entire purpose of these rules.

So we have a rule that will be extremely costly, relies on dubious assumptions and, as this Committee has also heard testimony at previous hearings results in reductions in carbon emissions and global temperature decreases which, according to EPA's own models, will be negligible on a global scale. This is a continuation of this administration's "war on the poor." I will once again remind my colleagues that while we might be able to absorb electricity rate increases, many of our constituents do not have that ability. This is especially true in my home state of Oklahoma, which relies heavily on coal for

electricity generation and as a result enjoys electricity prices which are far below the national average. Coal – and to an extent natural gas – are the sources of fuel this rule will phase out, and is the true intention of this administration's agenda.

This rule will impose tremendous costs on the American people with very few benefits, and it is my hope this hearing highlights how misguided the Clean Power Plan truly is.

I thank all of our witnesses for testifying today and specifically thank the Energy Information Administration for conducting this important report. The Clean Power Plan and the impact that it will have on the American people is an important matter that this Committee should investigate. I look forward to the testimony of all of our witnesses as we examine the implications of this regulation.

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